CHRISTIANITY AND THE UNITED STATES

JOHN FRANKLIN GOUCHER

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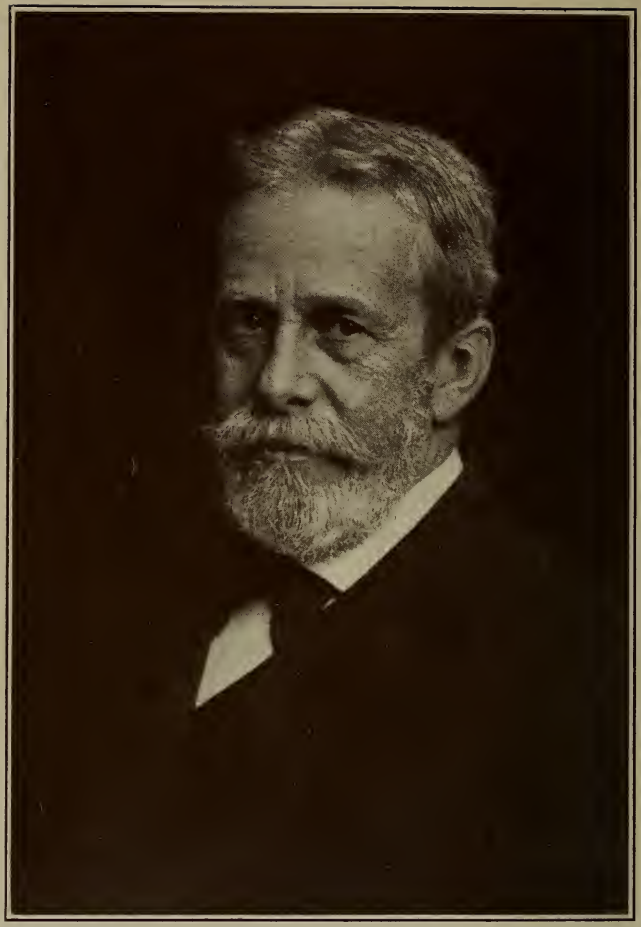

Cordially Yours

John F. Goucher.

CHRISTIANITY AND THE UNITED STATES

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NOTE

A request to address the Tokyo Conference of the World's Student Christian Federation on "Christianity and the United States" accounts for the preparation of this paper, the latter part of which was read before that body at its meeting in March, 1907.

I am keenly conscious of its inadequacy to more than suggest some of the outstanding facts concerning the vital and determining relation of Christianity to the United States of America. In this limited space I am debarred from formally defining, or even naming, the varying forms of evil and organized forces which contend with it for mastery, or discussing our epochal conflicts, every one of which has marked an advance for righteousness.

A stout volume would not be sufficient to do justice to the changing phases and subtle relations of this complex subject. But the more comprehensive the range of facts considered and the more thorough the analysis of the antagonizing forces in their relation to each other and to humanity, the more manifest is the dominant influence of Christianity in our national life and its essential relation to our future development.

I have consulted, so far as possible, the original sources of information, and, while acknowledging my primary obligation to them, I desire to make special mention of my indebtedness for both facts and suggestions to The Statesman's Year Book, Dr. Daniel Dorchester, Dr. Josiah Strong, Dr. H. K. Carroll, Dr. J. B. Clark, and Dr. E. N. Hardy.

JOHN FRANKLIN GOUCHER.

CHRISTIANITY AND THE UNITED STATES

Four centuries ago the land now occupied by the forty-five republics known collectively as the United States of America was a vast waste. Its stately forests were untraversed except by Indians, scarcely less wild than the game they hunted; its majestic rivers were unutilized except for fishing, or floating an occasional canoe of crudest construction; its varied and apparently inexhaustible mineral deposits were unworked, its prairies untilled, and its savannas unsubdued. Less than half a million roving children of the chase were its sole occupants and they were without roads except the trails worn by their moccasined feet; without cities except here and there an aggregation of skin or bark wigwams; without art or architecture save that crystallized from prehistoric times in the ruins of the Southwest; without organized courts of justice or a system of broadening culture; without literature, or a form of writing except a few rudimentary pictographs; and the land itself, though facing the Atlantic and the

Pacific, midway between Europe and Asia, was unknown.

This terra incognita has become the chief thoroughfare of the world's commerce and travel. Within its borders has been developed a great nation with 80,000,000 self-governing citizens, whose industry, intelligence, initiative, public spirit, courage, and self-command are unsurpassed. Its high ideal of manhood, its moral stamina, even-handed justice, aggressive home policies, and frank, uncompromising relations to foreign nations have made it a world power, honored in all lands, although its standing army of 70,000 is in numbers only fourteenth among the nations of the world, and in tonnage its navy ranks but fourth. Its judicial authority, vested in a Supreme Court of nine justices, who have always been incorruptible, is cheerfully obeyed. The public school system, which it has devised and elaborated and maintains at an annual cost to the state of $273,216,227, provides free primary and secondary education for every child within its borders, and has been commended as an inspiration and a model for all nations. Its mechanics and laborers are the best educated, the most productive, the best paid, the best housed, the

best clothed, and the best fed in the world. Its production of iron and steel in 1905 was more than half the world's output the previous year. Its production of gold is second only to Australia, and of silver to Mexico; while the value of its agricultural products in 1905 exceeded the value of the total output of gold in the entire world during the thirty years previous. It has within its borders two fifths of the entire railway mileage of the world. The shipping which passed through one of its water ways, the locks of its Sault Sainte Marie, during eight months of 1905 (36,617,699 tons) was twice the tonnage which during twelve months of the same year passed through the Suez Canal (18,310,442 tons), which carries commerce for all the world.

The United States has accumulated $100,000-000,000 in material wealth, which is more than the aggregate of both Great Britain and Germany, or equal to that of France, Russia, Italy, Belgium, and the Netherlands combined; while its banking power in 1905 was nearly one half (44 per cent) of the total banking power of the entire world.

The development of the United States was not a simple proposition. It presented complex and unusual problems, the solution of

which required a generous, persistent purpose with immense constructive and vitalizing energy. An unknown land, beyond treacherous seas which no adventurous keel had ever crossed, had to be discovered. The ideal and germ of a new and comprehensive government had to be formed wherein liberty and law, the Church and the State, conscience and environment would have full play and co-operate to so exalt manhood that the sovereign people should possess the influence and dignity formerly accorded to priests and kings. A population had to be gathered, indoctrinated, and assimilated, while the national life was being defined, organized, developed, and articulated with other nations.

There was no nation which offered favorable conditions for attaining the type of manhood which it required. A stream cannot rise higher than its source, and yet this nation has been so developed as to measurably perform and steadily approximate the high functions proposed. How can this be accounted for? What force could supply the motive, command the devotion, enforce the restraints, and organize the elements essential to meet these varied and phenomenal demands and develop such a nation, within such conditions?

The vital, uplifting, organizing, and expanding power of Christianity is the adequate cause of these extraordinary results. A broad distinction is to be made between Christianity and the Church. Love is the spirit of Christianity, while the Church is its more or less immature, and at times distorted, body. Christianity is not a series of mandatory or prohibitive enactments, neither is it a form of worship, nor a system of doctrine. Christianity is a life, satisfying all essentially human relations by interpreting God, the Father of us all, in terms of human living. It is the embodiment of God in human personality—the extension of the incarnation of Jesus Christ. God is love, and he said, "If ye have love one to another all men shall know that ye are my disciples." So Christianity is the embodiment of the vital, transforming, uplifting power of love working toward righteousness, which inhibits cruelty, oppression, injustice, selfishness, ignorance, and all low-spirited activities. Liberty is a concomitant of its growth, and helpfulness is its normal manifestation.

Christianity accounts for the discovery and settlement of America, it determined our governmental organization, and has been the dominating influence in our national development.

1. Discovery.

The desire to extend Christianity to unknown lands induced Queen Isabella of Spain to pledge her jewels that she might provide funds to equip Christopher Columbus for his voyage of discovery. When Columbus set his adventurous feet upon the New World, which Isabella's religious zeal had made it possible for him to discover, he planted the cross of Christ beside the banner of Castile and Leon, thus interpreting the desire of his royal patroness by dedicating this land to civil government and the higher authority of redeeming love.

In later years, before the national government had any purpose to preëmpt the territory west of the Rocky Mountains, and when, in fact, the government considered that region to be inaccessible and undesirable, the churches, in their zeal to extend the teachings of Christianity, sent their pioneer preachers to the extreme Northwest. Thus, in 1834, Rev. Jason Lee penetrated the untrodden forests, threaded the hitherto undiscovered mountain passes, forded or swam the unbridged rivers, and crossed the inhospitable plains, braving the cruelty of warring Indians, and blazed a trail for 2,000 miles through the trackless wilderness for the govern-

ment to follow, and all because the love of Christ for human souls constrained him to preach the gospel to the far-away Westerners.

Similar agencies, inspired or directed by the zeal for Christianity, extended our borders till a large part of the continent became the possession of our nation.

II. Settlement.

The earliest settlers of the original colonies came from various lands, with various motives and under various conditions, but their leaders were characterized by a remarkable unanimity of purpose—to find a refuge from spiritual despotism, to secure personal liberty in the worship of God, and to have freedom of local self-government in the New World.

The "Compact of the Freemen of the Colony of New Plymouth," prepared in the cabin of the Mayflower and adopted at Cape Cod, November 11, 1620, says: "We whose names are underwritten, . . . having undertaken, for the glory of God and advancement of the Christian faith and honor of our King and country, a voyage to plant the first colony in the northern part of Virginia, do by these presents, solemnly and mutually, in the presence

of God and of one another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil body politic for our better ordering and preservation and furthering of the ends aforesaid."

This compact is a fair expression of the fundamental principles which to a greater or less degree actuated the first settlers of all the colonies, namely, loyalty to God, and the desire for liberty of conscience and speech, security of person and property, and the exercise of their right to "form such just and equal laws . . . as shall be thought most meet and convenient for the general good."

Within ten years, in the first half of the century, more than 20,000 Separatists, Puritans, Dissenters, Independents, Presbyterians, and Baptists sailed from England for this land of religious freedom, of whom one half of one per cent had been graduated from Oxford or Cambridge.

A careful historian has said: "The men engaged in the formation of the New England colonies have seldom been surpassed in sagacity and prowess, in piety and benevolent exertion. Many of them were men of education and rank. . . . Their heart was with God, his love their guide, his glory their aim."

The first charter of Virginia, granted by King James I in 1606, says: "We, greatly commending and graciously accepting of their desires for the furtherance of so noble a work, which may by the providence of Almighty God hereafter tend to the glory of his Divine Majesty in propagating the Christian religion to such people as yet live in darkness and miserable ignorance of the true knowledge and worship of God," etc.

About 1634 an act establishing religious freedom was passed in the Province of Maryland by "the Assembly of Freemen," and sanctioned by the Proprietor and Governor—the latter, his council, and probably a majority of the Assembly being Protestants.

The Dutch of New York were children of the Reformation, and, however eager for trade, brought their religion with them. New Jersey was settled largely by Presbyterians. The Quakers of Pennsylvania had deep-rooted principles of personal liberty and reverence for God, which the Presbyterians strengthened. Delaware was settled by Christian Swedes sent out by their Christian king, Gustavus Adolphus, who declared his purpose of making the new colony "a blessing to the common man as well

as the whole Protestant world." The charter of Carolina, granted in 1663, recites that the petitioners "being excited with a laudable and pious zeal for the propagation of the Christian faith," etc. The settlement of Georgia was a philanthropic enterprise influenced largely by Moravians and Presbyterians.

Mr. Bryce says: "It was religious zeal and the religious consciousness which led to the founding of the New England colonies two centuries and a half ago, those colonies whose spirit has in such large measure passed into the whole nation."

Mr. Bancroft says: "Our fathers were not only Christians, but almost unanimously they were Protestants. The colonists from Maine to Carolina, the adventurous companions of Smith, the Puritan felons that freighted the fleet of Winthrop, the Quaker outlaws that fled from jails with the Newgate prisoner as sovereign—all had faith in God and in the soul."

The early settlers were far from being ideal men or all of a kind. Many, very many, were adventurers with bad morals and selfish motives. But these were accidents of environment or victims of unavoidable ignorance and systematic oppression rather than criminals by choice, or

offenders against the fundamental rights of humanity by preference. Rarely were they purposefully organized for evil, while the leaders of thought and usually those in authority were persistently perfecting their organizations to conserve and develop Christian ethics. The energy of the worst, when well directed, became invaluable in the wilderness life.

Dr. J. B. Clark has well said: "With all its unwinnowed chaff, was there ever so much precious seed for the planting of a nation, Pilgrims, Moravians, and Huguenots, Covenanters and Churchmen, Presbyterians and Baptists, Lutherans and Quakers, displaying many banners, but on them all one Name, seeking many goods, but holding one good supreme—freedom to worship God as the Spirit taught and as conscience interpreted."

Such were our forbears who laid the foundations of the Republic, and such the motives which influenced them to brave the rigors of an inhospitable wilderness. As might be expected, the outcome was a Christian nation.

III. Organization.

In the early part of the second third of the eighteenth century that vigorous spiritual

leader, Jonathan Edwards, with earnestness which compelled attention and logic which was unanswerable, so argued for justification by faith as to produce a profound impression upon the mind and conscience of the thinking class. Half a decade later the eloquent and impassioned appeals of that untiring evangelist, George Whitefield, as he persuaded men to righteousness, brought a great spiritual uplift to all classes in America. "Magistrates and civilians, merchants and mechanics, women and children, servants and negroes, all were religiously affected and many (estimated at 50,000 in New England alone) were converted."

This quickening of religious consciousness, deepening of ethical conviction, strengthening of evangelistic fervor, and awakening of patriotic devotion were preparatory to the birth of our nation. After more than a century and a half of isolation from their central government, misunderstandings of their condition, indifference to their interests, disregard of their petitions, oppressive legislation, and frequent indignities, these people, who had sought a haven from spiritual oppression in the New World, enjoyed freedom of conscience and amid untold hardships nursed their longings for per-

sonal liberty, declared their independence, and submitted their cause to the arbitrament of war.

Great human principles and movements are not thought out with the mind, they are felt out with the heart. The process is not syllogistic, but experimental. By long-protracted suffering and great personal sacrifices for a common cause, by courage and comradeship in its defense, and by mutual interest to be conserved the colonists were fused into oneness of desire for national life. This their Continental Congress formulated in the Declaration of Independence and subsequently the Constitution defined the powers of the government and safeguarded the rights of its citizens. Article VI provides that "No religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States." But the principles which underlie the Constitution are identical with and essentially related to the spirit of Christianity. This fact may be set forth most convincingly by a few quotations, official and otherwise, from eminent and unprejudiced men.

Mr. Bryce, in The American Commonwealth, says: "There is no established church

in the United States. All religious bodies are absolutely equal before the law and unrecognized by the law, except as voluntary associations of private citizens. . . . It never occurs to the average American that there is any reason why a state church should exist, yet each House of Congress has a chaplain and opens its proceedings each day with prayer. The President annually, after the end of the harvest, issues a proclamation ordering a general thanksgiving and occasionally appoints a day of fasting and humiliation.

"So prayers are offered in the State Legislature and State governors issue proclamations for days of religious observance. In 1863 Congress requested the President to appoint a day of humiliation and prayer. In the army and navy provision is made for religious service conducted by chaplains of various denominations. In most States there exist laws punishing blasphemy or profane swearing by the name of God, and laws restricting or forbidding trade or labor on the Sabbath.

"The matter may be summed up by saying that Christianity is in fact understood to be, though not the legally established religion, yet, the national religion. . . . The Americans deem

the general acceptance of Christianity to be one of the main sources of their national prosperity."

Justice Allen says: "Christianity is not the legal religion of the States, as established by law. But it is in fact, and ever has been, the religion of the people. This fact is everywhere prominent in all our civil and political history, and has been from the first recognized and acted upon by the people, as well as by constitutional conventions, by legislatures, and by courts of justice."

The New York "Journal of Commerce" editorially said: "The Bible is the corner stone of our whole fabric, and that Book, in the vernacular tongue, in the hands of everybody, is the grand principle of Americanism. This is the American plan of liberty."

Daniel Webster, distinguished as both jurist and statesman, said in his plea before the Supreme Court in the Girard will case: "It is the same in Pennsylvania as elsewhere; the general principles and public policy are sometimes established by constitutional provisions, sometimes by legislative enactments, sometimes by judicial decisions, sometimes by general consent. But however they may be established, there is nothing that we look for with more

certainty than the general principle that Christianity is the law of the land. This is the case among the Puritans of New England, the Episcopalians of the Southern States, the Pennsylvania Quakers, the Baptists, the mass of the followers of Whitefield and Wesley, and the Presbyterians; all brought and all adopted this great truth, and all sustain it, . . . all proclaim that Christianity to which the sword and fagot are unknown, gentle, tolerant Christianity, is the law of the land."

Professor Story in his great work on the Constitution, says: "There never has been a period in which the common law did not recognize Christianity as lying at its foundation. It repudiates every act done in violence of its duties of perfect obligation. It pronounces illegal every contract offensive to its morals."

Chief Justice Shea, of the Marine Court of New York city, says: "The Constitution of the United States of America, and the laws in pursuance thereof, declare, with approved wisdom and decorum, by necessary presupposition and inference, that the tenets of the Christian religion lie at the foundation of the government and are to protect and regulate its operations. Our own government, and the laws which ad-

minister it, are in every part, legislative, judicial, and executive, Christian in nature, form, and purpose."

Judge Strong, of the United States Supreme Court, says: "The laws and institutions of all the States are built on the foundation of reverence for Christianity."

In the case of Holy Trinity Church vs. United States, the Supreme Court, after mentioning various circumstances, formally declares, "These and many other matters which might be noticed add a volume of unofficial declarations to the mass of organic utterances that this is a Christian nation."

Nothing is more certain that this, the spirit of Christianity determined the governmental organization of the United States, as it accounts for the discovery and settlement of America.

IV. Development.

The grant of land which the government made to its soldiers of the Revolution and its homestead preëmption laws, the sympathetic response of individual churches to applications for pastoral service from former parishioners who had moved West, and the zeal of various Home Missionary

Societies contributed largely to the expansion of the nation.

In 1800 the United States included only sixteen States, with an area of 827,442 square miles and a population of 5,308,483, spread like a picket-line along the Atlantic slope, while Ohio was a far-distant Territory. In 1900 it extended from the Atlantic to the Pacific, including forty-five States, an area of 3,025,600 square miles, a population of 76,303,387, and had accumulated $94,300,000,000 in material wealth.

During the century twenty-nine great commonwealths, each with an average area very nearly as large as England and Scotland combined, had been carved out of the wilderness, organized and equipped with all the accessories of the most advanced Christian civilization, 5,000,000 farms had been brought under cultivation and stocked with domestic animals, valued at $2,228,123,134, mines had been developed, roads constructed, mills and manufactories established, while homes had been built and furnished for 70,000,000 citizens.

This involved the incoming and assimilation of multitudes of immigrants. During the last sixty years of the century more than 24,000,000 foreigners, whose financial resources did not

average $19 in cash, have come to dwell within our borders. The majority of these were unfamiliar with our language, and a large per cent were illiterate, ignorant of evangelical Christianity, and, having inherited a spirit of intolerance or anarchy, which they smuggled in under their naturalization papers, they were out of sympathy with the genius of our government. These and their descendants had to be informed—in many cases reformed—and assimilated.

Isolation is the mother of barbarism, as separation from the gentle restraints of home is a fruitful cause of moral degeneration. The agricultural population in our rapidly advancing frontiers was scattered, while in mining, lumber, and construction camps rough men, separated from the refining associations of mother, wife, and daughters, and subjected to the gambling and impure influences usual to such conditions, gathered in their scramble for wealth.

If there are gross sins among us and occasional ebullitions of inhumanity which shock the moral sense—and we are sadly conscious of their number and variety—they neither interpret the spirit of Christianity nor the steady trend of our national life, but contradict both and reveal the

obduracy of the material and pernicious influences which complicate the problem we are gradually solving.

Providentially, previous to 1840 our total immigration from all quarters did not exceed half a million. In the earlier years of the century these came largely from Great Britain and Canada, and aided sympathetically to reproduce the spirit of the nation in the States organized within that period. But for the last quarter of the century more than half the immigrants were Italian, Hungarian, and Russian, and their percentage of illiteracy was 45, 24, and 25 respectively.

In 1863 our government emancipated 4,000,000 negro slaves, an inheritance from colonial days, all of whom were illiterate. What power other than the spirit of Christianity, which had made us a nation of freemen, could prepare such unpromising material to exercise the rights and perform the duties of freemen?

The citizens of the United States, from earliest times, had a prophetic dread of large populations developing in new areas and seeking admission into the Union without possessing the Christian character and institutions essential to a self-governing people.

The ordinance passed by Congress in 1787, establishing "The Territory Northwest of the Ohio River," stated that "Religion, morality, and knowledge being essential to good government and the happiness of mankind" were "forever" to be encouraged. This ordinance inaugurated the government of Territories as incipient States and barred the extension of slavery.

Within the first decade after the adoption of the Constitution of the United States, the Baptist, Congregational, Presbyterian, and Reformed Churches, in Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, New York, and other States, without consultation but almost simultaneously, formed societies to supply money and preachers to work, as they stated it, for "the welfare of the region beyond," and "overtake the rapidly multiplying settlements with the means of Christian civilization." Within the same decade the Methodists, who are a missionary propaganda by both doctrine and discipline, organized the Methodist Episcopal Church.

During the nineteenth century more than thirty national Home Missionary Societies developed within the evangelical churches, and expended over $200,000,000 for the extension

of Christianizing influences among the widely scattered settlers.

In 1777, while our War of Independence was in progress, our scant financial resources but partially organized and overburdened and our national existence at stake, a memorial was presented to Congress petitioning the government to help supply the people with Bibles. Congress referred the petition to a committee, who recommended "that the government take immediate measures to secure 20,000 copies from Holland, Scotland, or elsewhere at the expense of Congress." In 1781 Congress, by a special resolution, highly recommended to the people of the United States the Bible printed by Robert Aitkin, of Philadelphia. Before 1815 over 130 societies had been organized in the United States to print or distribute the Bible.

The American Bible Society, organized in 1816, had an income last year of $821,223 and issued 2,236,755 Bibles or portions of the Bible, in various languages. It has issued since its organization 78,509,529 copies, a considerable part of which were for distribution abroad. It has 541 auxiliary societies, and there are many other smaller Bible societies in the nation engaged in similar work.

As the teachings of the Bible are the inspiration of our national life, a careful canvass was made of all the States and Territories at least four times during the nineteenth century to supply every family with a copy in its own language.

The American Tract Society, organized in 1825 to disseminate Christian literature, was preceded by many local organizations in the individual churches. In three quarters of a century it has issued about 800,000,000 copies of its various publications, and there are many similar but smaller societies.

The American Sunday School Union, organized in 1824, has gathered over 100,000 Sunday schools, with 600,000 voluntary teachers, by whom the Bible and Christian hymns have been taught to 4,500,000 Sunday school scholars. In addition to this it has prepared Christian literature adapted to children and young people, and distributed it among the needy churches and Sunday schools, in our army and navy, reformatories, prisons, penitentiaries, and among the dependent classes, at an aggregate expense of over $9,000,000. Most of the larger denominations have similar organizations.

Possibly the most distinctively American institution is our public school. It is among the

most formative of our many agencies working for the moral and intellectual education of the people, and it owes its origin and development to the spirit and foresight of the churches. Evangelical Christianity inevitably quickens intellectual activity, begets an appreciation of the relations and responsibilities of life, and develops opportunities for making the most of one's self.

In 1645 the people of Dorchester made the "first public provision in the world for a free school supported by a direct taxation on the inhabitants of the town." The teacher was required to open the school morning and evening with prayer and to catechize his scholars in the principles of the Christian religion.

So public schools were devised and fostered in every colony, with distinctive religious instruction as their chief concern. Starting with widely scattered local initiative, they had three things in common: the religious impulse, the church members as their loyal and liberal promoters, and Christian character as their objective.

The schools have been developed and greatly improved in organization, supervision, equipment, and methods of teaching by converging influences and the combined efforts of many

devoted and efficient educators. While they do not impart formal religious instruction, leaving that to the home and the Church, and most of them do not include the Bible in their daily exercises, to the great regret of very many, yet their teachers are generally Christians and their discipline and trend are increasingly ethical.

All religions are more or less educative. Christianity is essentially so. Plant it anywhere and the demand for a Christian college soon emerges. It is not surprising, therefore, that our American colleges owe their foundation and maintenance to the spirit and liberality of the churches.

Harvard, the first institution for the promotion of higher education in America, was born of religious conviction and adopted as its motto, "In Christi Gloriam." For more than 130 years every president, except one, was a minister, and during its first century 45 per cent of its graduates were ministers.

The grant for the second college, William and Mary, founded in 1693 in Virginia, was made "for propagating the pure gospel of Christ, our only Mediator, to the praise and honor of Almighty God," and it owed its success to the Rev. Dr. Blair.

Yale was founded in response to the formal action of a Synod of the Church in 1698, that "youth may be instructed in the arts and the sciences, who through the blessing of Almighty God may be fitted for public employment in the Church and civil State." Its trustees were limited to Congregational ministers living in the colony, and for more than a century every one of its presidents was a minister.

Every college projected in the colonial period owed its origin to the Church, and that which was universally true in the colonial period has been predominantly true ever since. The American educational spirit was inspired and has been nourished by the Christian churches.

Of the 370 colleges and universities reported by the Commissioner of Education in 1884—I quote from that report because it is the latest I have at hand—309, or over 83 per cent, were under denominational control; only 61, or less than 17 per cent, were undenominational, and 23 of these were State institutions. More than three fourths, nearly four fifths (79 per cent), of all the students were in the denominational institutions.

A record of ten Western colleges and three theological seminaries shows that their grad-

uates had served as pastors or missionaries in 3,000 towns, and supplied 15,000 towns with 30,000 teachers.

The expenditure for Bibles, Sunday school extension, tract distribution, denominational literature, and Christian education has exceeded $300,000,000, which added to the $200,000,000 expended in church extension, makes over $500,000,000, voluntarily contributed by Christian people, that youth, the isolated and the less favored, might be prepared for Christian citizenship—the strong bearing the infirmities of the weak, and so fulfilling the law of Christ.

The problems of a growing nation continually change. This is especially true where personal freedom gives large stimulus to personal initiative, and social, industrial, and economic conditions are finding varied and colossal development. It has come to pass that the frontiers of our civilization are found to-day in our "homeless cities." In 1800 but 3 per cent of our population was urban; in 1900, 33 per cent. In our 160 cities of 25,000 or more, 53 per cent of the population are foreign-born or of foreign parentage.

This change of population from the country to congested centers in the cities, and its con-

comitant conditions, seriously compromise the home life and threaten both virtue and intelligence. The business opportunities, varied attractions, and general glamour of the city appeal especially to young men and young women, alluring them away from the less strenuous demands of the rustic and village life. Unsophisticated, homeless, and ofttimes without employment or financial resources, they are in danger of being caught in a maelstrom of vice and swept into dissipation and impurity before they have gained a footing. The Church is a natural haven and wise friend for such.

The Young Men's Christian Association, transplanted from England in 1851, has done a magnificent work among this especially strategic class. In 1901, at the close of half a century, it had 1,600 separate organizations, 332,224 members, and over $24,000,000 invested in its work. It has a separate department for colleges and schools, with a membership of 170,000; a department for work among railroad men, with 170 organizations and 50,000 members. Another department is conducting efficient work in our army and navy; 632 army posts report some form of its work.

The Young Women's Christian Association is working effectively among the young women.

The Student Volunteer Movement; the bureau to extend organized Bible study; the employment bureaus; the inexpensive, attractive, and well-guarded homes for young men and young women, and other forms of beneficent enterprise by which these associations interpret the spirit of Christianity, seeking the young, quickening and conserving their holiest aspirations, and bringing to them enlargement of opportunity, are significant factors in our national life.

The Society of Christian Endeavor, the Epworth League, the Baptist Young People's Union, and similar organizations, with their enrollment of 5,000,000 young people whom they seek to indoctrinate in the principles of Christianity, interest in the activities of the Church, and prepare for good citizenship, are far-reaching in their influence.

The Sunday schools, for Bible instruction, with their aggregate enrollment of 14,000,000 children and youth, the almost interminable list of other denominational and interdenominational organizations, covering the whole range of life from the crèche and free kindergarten to

the homes for the aged and homes for the incurable, suggest the varied manifestations and exhaustless ministries of the spirit of Christianity as it stands related to our nation and its development.

Education, obedience to law, reverence for truth, temperance, security of life and property, material prosperity, social progress, patriotism, conscience, integrity are nurtured by Christianity. In a government by the people and for the people a high moral sense of duty counts for more than anything else.

This spirit of consecration, which generously gives of its substance and braves all dangers to secure the extension of Christianity, is neither self-centered nor indifferent to the demands of citizenship. Through its virility and constructive influence the development of the nation was secured.

Among the many extraordinary facts in the political history of the nineteenth century the most significant is the development of the United States of America. Nothing else bulks so large or is so inclusive of resources and achievement. Victor in every war which has engaged her prowess, determining her own ideals and prosecuting them in her own way,

the record of her organic evolution by the constructive influence of vital forces working from within is without a parallel.

The potential cause of this phenomenal evolution is the spirit of Christianity. That accounts for the discovery and settlement of America, it determined our governmental organization, and has been the dominating influence in our national development.

v. Present Status.

Marvelous as this record is, the growth of the evangelical churches has been more remarkable than the development of our nation. The cause must be greater than its results. In 1800 the Protestant church members were to the population of the United States as four to fifty-eight; in 1900, as four to seventeen. That is, during the century the evangelical church membership increased 3.41— times as fast as the population. The 2,340 churches, valued at $1,500,000 in 1800, had increased to 187,800 churches, valued at $724,900,000, in 1900. If the value of parsonages and denominational schools be added, there was $1,000,000,000 invested in property specifically dedicated for the dissemination of Christianity, all the free gift of its adherents.

Progress is a relative matter and, while we are yet far from the goal, the power of the gospel of Christ to redeem men, to uplift society, and to make a nation strong by righteousness has been demonstrated, and this force was never stronger, nor strengthening more rapidly, in the United States than to-day. The spirit of Christianity is more manifest in its varied activities, has a larger following among men of culture and influence, and is more widely diffused and constructive in our social problems than ever before.

As Timothy Dwight has well said, in the early part of the last century: "There was more individuality and less of the combination of forces, more of private effort directed to personal development and less of organized work for the common well-being, more serious reflection on the inner life and less of the freeness and largeness of Christian love, and less of the joyousness of Christian hope in its contrast to self-examining questions and self-distrusting fears."

Mr. Bryce says: "The relaxation of the old strictness of orthodoxy has not diminished the zeal of the various churches, nor their hold upon their adherents, nor their attachment to the fundamental doctrines of Christianity."

Dr. John Watson, after stating the criticism and evidence of non-Christian activities, says: "Never in any age nor in any land was that which saves and sanctifies presented more clearly and forcefully than it is, by word and life, in the Christian Church in the United States at the present time."

An average of twelve to fifteen new churches are being completed and dedicated every day of every week in the year within the commonwealth. The churches, through their Church Extension Societies, are giving annually $6,000,000, largely as grants in aid for new churches to the less favored communities.

In 1900 the churches spent for the maintenance of their activities, for philanthropy, and for Christian education $287,047,300. In the last four years they made a net gain of 11,771 ministers, 13,633 churches, and 3,433,959 communicants. The annual loss by death averages about one in seventy-five, and the loss by discipline is a considerable number; these make a total for the four years of, say, 1,400,000 which must be added to the net gain in membership to determine the actual ingathering.

If in America Christianity is characterized by less mysticism than formerly, it is distin-

guished by greater righteousness. If the sanctimonious look is less conspicuous, the outstretched hand is more in evidence. If it no longer burns witches and heretics, there is a deep moral revulsion against acts which formerly passed uncondemned. If the historic and literary settings of the Bible have been examined more critically and discussed less reservedly, nothing has been disturbed but a few human interpretations, and unthinking credulity is giving place to a more intelligent faith. Once the institution was more to its members than the underlying principles of love which it is intended to embody. Now these principles are more insisted upon than the institutional peculiarities. If the church members are not so jealous for a particular system, they are more concerned for righteousness and the larger kingdom of God. A notable absence of controversy, a kindliness of spirit, a hopefulness and expectancy in the discussions of our national denominational assemblies, mark the dawn of a better day. Instead of the dissipating rivalries of overzealous sectarians which at times have embroiled the Church, federated activities and organic union among branches of the same denominational family are securing economy of

resources, broadening of influence, and increasing efficiency.

The directive influence of the college graduate in the United States is very remarkable. Of the men over twenty-one years of age, about one in every one hundred, on the average, is a college graduate. A century ago it was only one in about every five hundred. Yet the college graduates have furnished 73+ per cent of the signers of the Declaration of Independence; 53— per cent of the Convention of 1787, which framed our Constitution; 32 per cent of the members of our national House of Representatives; 46 per cent of our senators; 65 per cent of our Presidents; and 73 per cent of the judges of our Supreme Court, while every chief justice except one has been a college graduate. Of the men now living who have won conspicuous success, as shown by Who's Who in America, 73+ per cent are college graduates; and the percentage is gradually rising.

The increasing influence of Christianity through men of culture and influence is indicated by the significant fact that, while the proportion of students in the colleges and universities who were members of the evangelical churches seventy-five years ago was only 25 per cent,

and fifty years ago 33 per cent, it is to-day 53 per cent and steadily increasing.

When men of clean lives go from America to a foreign land, where they are unknown, freed from the restraints of home, in peculiar conditions, overstrained nervously, or suffering from ennui, they sometimes cater to their lowest nature and behave in a beastly manner. That is neither the fault of the land they are visiting nor a correct interpretation of the land of their birth. So if others coming to America become loose in their habits, that does not interpret the land from which they came nor the ideals of the land where they fall. It is only just to estimate every land by those who live in it, rather than by those who live out of it or fail to adjust themselves to its ideals.

As Dr. Charles Cuthbert Hall has said: "If it can be said that some men lose in college the religious impulse imparted in childhood's home, it may also be said that many men find in college a conception of God, of life, of personal obligation all the more controlling because acquired under conditions of moral liberty that tested the soul as with a refiner's fire."

The influence of our colleges and universities is so vitally related to the life of their students,

and through them to the future of our nation and the world, we will do well to call expert testimony as to its character and tendency.

President Harper, late of Chicago University, said: "There is to be found to-day a religious interest in our colleges which is absolutely unparalleled. . . . It is unquestionable that the life of students to-day is more natural, more wholesome, more pure than in any previous period of education."

President Butler, of Columbia University, says: "Christian Associations exercise a powerful influence in college and intercollegiate athletics. Their members are almost uniformly among the leaders in the social, athletic, and scholastic life of the schools, and in their religious talk and living there is a refreshing and convincing note of manliness and whole-heartedness."

From the History of Yale University we quote: "Unquestionably the college is producing a more perfect physical manhood, which means the elimination of many temptations and not a few vices. The intellectual standards have steadily advanced, so that a graduate of 1800 could not more than meet the entrance requirements of 1900; and the personal ad-

vance in the deepening of the moral and spiritual life is fully as conspicuous as that in the physical and mental realm."

President Tucker says: "Our colleges are the recruiting ground for all agencies which do their work at the heart of humanity. . . . Deeper than the currents of the physical life, which run so swiftly, are the currents of the spiritual life."

E. N. Hardy says: "Every year the proportion of students who are Christians when entering college rises, and, while the stated revival is disappearing from both church and college, the average annual number of conversions in our colleges is to the total enrollment of students proportionately larger. . . . Never in the history of America was there such a large and superb body of young men and young women of college education eagerly pressing into the hardest places of service for Christ and the Church."

Anyone who has considered the Student Volunteer Conferences, held at Toronto in 1902 and at Nashville in 1906, or this Conference of the World's Student Christian Federation in Tokyo, must concede that they are indices of the "most marked religious phenomena of the age." This one phase of the religious life of

the college demonstrates that Christianity is becoming more and more deeply rooted in the centers of education and in the lives of the men of trained intellect. "The history of civilization teaches that as go the colleges so goes the nation."

The rays of light most effective in photography are those which do not class among the seven colors, but lie just beyond the spectrum as discernible to the unaided eye. So the activities which do not class as specifically under the direction of the churches, but are extra-denominational, may best photograph the pervasive influence of the spirit of Christianity in our nation.

Of the 50,000 newspapers and periodicals in the world, 20,528 are published in the United States. These may be classed as religious, semi-religious, or secular. A large number of the secular papers, both daily and weekly, regularly print the weekly Sunday school Bible lessons, with carefully prepared expositions, while most of the secular papers have from one column to a page or more devoted to "religious items and comments"; and all, with rare exceptions, whatever may be the sensational character of their news columns, ring true editorially to the

great ethical questions and benevolent activities which interpret Christianity.

The courts of justice, when inducting into office and taking testimony, administer the oath upon the Bible.

The care of the State for the afflicted and defective classes, in providing hospitals for the diseased, almshouses for the destitute, homes for the incurable, workhouses for the indigent, asylums for the insane, special schools for the blind, deaf, mute, and simple-minded, and reformatories for the incorrigible, is a practical charity born of the Christian spirit. A special bulletin recently issued by the Census Bureau reports 4,207 of these benevolent institutions, and the cost of maintaining them, exclusive of improvements, for the year 1903 was $55,577,633. Of this sum $22,353,184 was paid from public funds.

It is estimated that in 1904 in the State of New York $25,000,000 was spent for philanthropy. A distinguished English writer says: "In works of active beneficence no country has surpassed, perhaps none has equalled, the United States."

It has come to pass that employers, both corporate and individual, are seeking industrial

betterment through the development of manhood by substituting justice and humanity for spasmodic charity, in well-directed efforts to improve the physical, mental, and moral condition of their employees. These efforts are so varied and significant as to constitute one of the most noteworthy features of our social progress. They include profit-sharing, savings associations, accident relief funds, insurance, pensions, public buildings, libraries, gymnasiums, athletic grounds, baths, model homes, social and educational clubs, lectures, lunch rooms, rest rooms, hospitals, trained nurses, park carriages and seaside cottages for convalescents, week's vacation with pay, annual excursions, loans on homes at moderate interest, prizes for suggestions in machines or methods, and many others, all of which register a practical recognition of the ethical responsibility of both employers and employees. A number of firms have added to their business staff a "social secretary," to promote a closer relationship between the employer and employee.

The legislation intended to regulate the relation between capital and labor is growing steadily more and more considerate of the supreme value of personality, and more and

more restrictive of combinations, indifference to health, and sordidness. It provides that the employee shall have a safe place to labor, safe appliances and proper instruction in their use, and the employer is held liable for damages resulting from failure to do this. About half the States provide for the sanitary regulation of factories and shops, with inspectors to enforce the laws, which are constantly being improved, and more than a dozen States maintain free employment bureaus.

The National Civic Federation, representing labor, capital, and the people at large, is composed of most representative men. Its work is in the interests of justice and conciliation, which it seeks to secure through the dissemination of information, development of confidence, and encouragement of conferences.

The spirit of arbitration, industrial, commercial, national, and international, which appeals to reason instead of force, makes steady progress. Processes are sometimes slow when conditions are varied, but, as Dr. John Watson says, "there can be no question that whenever an issue of righteousness is put before the nation, the nation decides rightly."

The attitude of the nation toward Cuba, the

Philippines, South America, Mexico, China, Japan, and other nations, is no spasmodic expression of a Christian spirit which she fails to practice at home. When our civil war had been fought to a finish, establishing the government of the people and eradicating human slavery from our borders, the victors, admiring the honesty, courage, and sacrifices of their defeated fellow citizens, "sent them home equipped with the needful appliances of husbandry, to till the soil, repair their shattered industries, reconstruct the States upon whose altars they had offered their lives, and invited them to share the glory of governing the restored republic."

There is great awakening to civic righteousness throughout the nation, which is keying up political integrity, fiduciary honesty, and social purity. As these are all essentially ethical questions they come within the Church's sphere of influence, though they are neither confined to nor directed by the Church. This movement is organized in more than eighty centers and is strengthening its influence by detailed organization, interchange of counsel, and an ably conducted educational propaganda, which seeks to root its motives in the conscience and

intelligence of the citizen. Many notable victories have been won, like those in Boston, New York, Jersey City, Philadelphia, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Toledo, and Salt Lake City. High officials have been held to strict account, like the senator from Oregon, the senator from Kansas, the management of great insurance companies and commercial corporations, and various prominent politicians. The steady pull of the national life is toward the ethical standard of Christianity.

While the Constitution provides that "No religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office or public trust under the United States," widely diffused appreciation of Christian character and its dominating influence throughout the nation are shown by the high positions to which Christians have been called by the free franchise of the people. In September, 1906, just before leaving America, I instituted inquiries concerning the religious affiliation of the members of Congress, and regret that want of time prevented me from securing complete returns, but I give a summary of the facts so far as I received them.

Of the 387 members of the House of Repre-

sentatives, 252, or 65 per cent, were reported, and 216, or 85+ per cent of these, are members of the evangelical churches. Of the 90 senators, 60, or two thirds, were reported, and 53, or 88+ per cent, are connected with the evangelical churches, and nearly every member in both Houses of Congress is a believer in some form of Christianity.

Of the 9 members of the Cabinet, 7 are evangelical Christians, 1 Roman Catholic, and 1 Unitarian.

Of the 9 members of the Supreme Court, 6 are evangelical Christians, 2 Roman Catholics, and 1 Unitarian. There has never been an atheist or agnostic (with possibly one exception) among the judges of our Supreme Court. These men, who know evidence and constitute one of the great judicial bodies of the world, all (with one possible exception) have been believers in some form of Christianity.

Of the 25 who have been Presidents of the United States all have been believers in Christianity, 16 have been communicants. Since President Lincoln, who was a man of faith and prayer, everyone elected to that high office has been a communicant in some one of the evangelical churches. Could there be a stronger

testimony to the pervasive influence of the spirit of Christianity?

Jesus Christ commanded his disciples to "Go heal," which includes all forms of benevolence; to "Go teach," which includes all forms of Christian education; to "Go disciple," or to bring all instructed persons into organic relation to the kingdom of God. The essential spirit of Christianity is interpreted and to be gauged by obedience to these three commands.

The benevolence of the United States is more varied, considerate, widely diffused, and generous than at any time in its previous history. Education in the United States, both primary and advanced, is more thorough, more accessible to our youth, and more nearly interprets the ethics of Christianity than ever before. The presidents of the State, military, naval, and undenominational as well as of the denominational colleges and schools for higher education are almost to a man believers in some form of Christianity. Not one of them is identified with any other form of religion, and the great majority of them are evangelical Christians. This is almost equally true of the leading professors. If an occasional one is found who is not, it is relatively so rare an occurrence as to

be very conspicuous. Christianity is the pervading and directing influence in American education. Each year the number of Bible classes maintained by the students for devotional study increases and the interest deepens, while the colleges are more largely offering systematic Bible study as an elective and in their regular curriculum.

Last year (1906) the churches in America made a net gain of 4,300 ministers, 3,635 churches, and 870,389 communicants, and gave $8,980,448 to extend the ministries and knowledge of Christian truth among non-Christian peoples.

The tone of our public life, the quality of our statesmanship, the ideals of our nation, have been lifted closer to the ethical standards of Christianity and in a measure sanctified during the past ten years.

Evangelical Christianity, so patient and persistently constructive, so essentially educative and uplifting, has been the potential cause of our growth and transformation. By the gentle persuasion of loving ministry, by the inherent energy of the simple truths concerning God and man as revealed in Christ Jesus, by the living force of consecrated lives, the wilderness has

been made to blossom as the rose; a world power has developed where there were no people; loyalty to Christian principles has evolved an unprecedented wealth of resources, and the fundamental conviction of the American people is that "righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people."

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